

SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE
DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS
KENT CONRAD, RANKING MEMBER

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**BUSH BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR STATE
DEPARTMENT LACKS CRUCIAL DETAILS**
**Administration Puts Off Requests For Additional Funds For International
Affairs Budget In Order To Make Room For Bush Tax Cut Now**

Washington, DC – Senator Kent Conrad, the senior Democrat on the Senate Budget Committee, today faulted the Bush Administration for leaving crucial details out of its budget proposal for the State Department, including large requests for additional funding that are likely to come in the next few years. Conrad's remarks came after a Senate Budget Committee hearing with Secretary of State Colin Powell.

"The Bush Administration has left huge questions unanswered about how much money it will be seeking for the State Department over the next several years and where it will be spent," said Conrad. "I can only conclude that the Bush Administration has left these details out because they know that they cannot afford the large increases they will be seeking without cutting back on other priorities or driving us back into deficit. President Bush's massive tax cut simply eats up too much of his budget, leaving almost nothing left for other needs."

"Despite the release of additional information earlier this week, the Bush Administration still does not provide specific numbers on how much it proposes spending on key Administration and Congressional priorities such as assistance to the former Soviet states."

"Perhaps even worse, the Bush Administration provides no reliable estimate of how much it will be requesting for international affairs beyond next year. Secretary Powell has already testified that 'this budget submission is far from the end of the game' and that 'President Bush also has expectations that we will do better' for the State Department in the outyears."

"President Bush is doing almost the exact same thing with the defense budget. He is putting off asking for more money until he has pushed through his massive tax cut. He is doing this because his budget doesn't add up and if he asked for the spending now, it would be clear to everyone that his budget plan will bring us right back to the deficits of the 1980s. No one is going to be fooled by that. The President's tax cut is too big and the lack of detail in his budget submission makes that point loud and clear."

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